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MARRIAGE *and*
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among
STRANGE PEOPLES



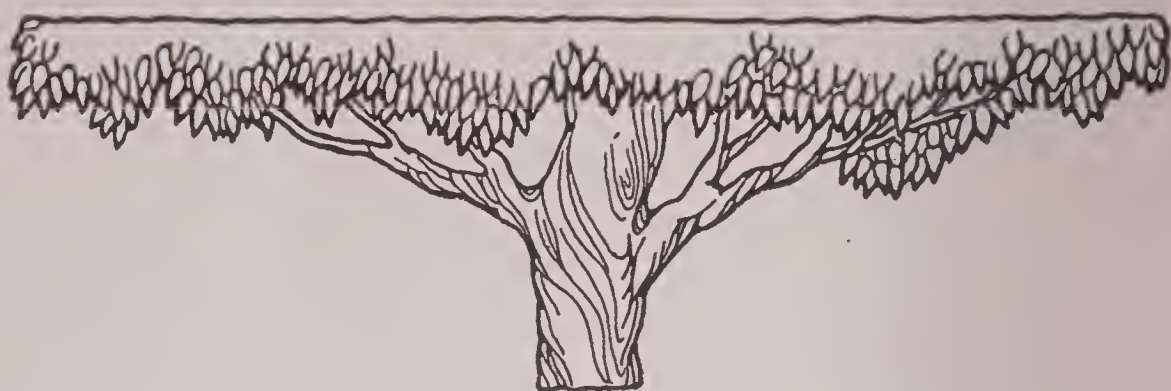
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MARRIAGE *and* FAMILY LIFE
among STRANGE PEOPLES



TREE OF KNOWLEDGE
UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME



Percy Holmes Boynton
THE CHALLENGE OF MODERN CRITICISM

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PREFACE TO FICTION

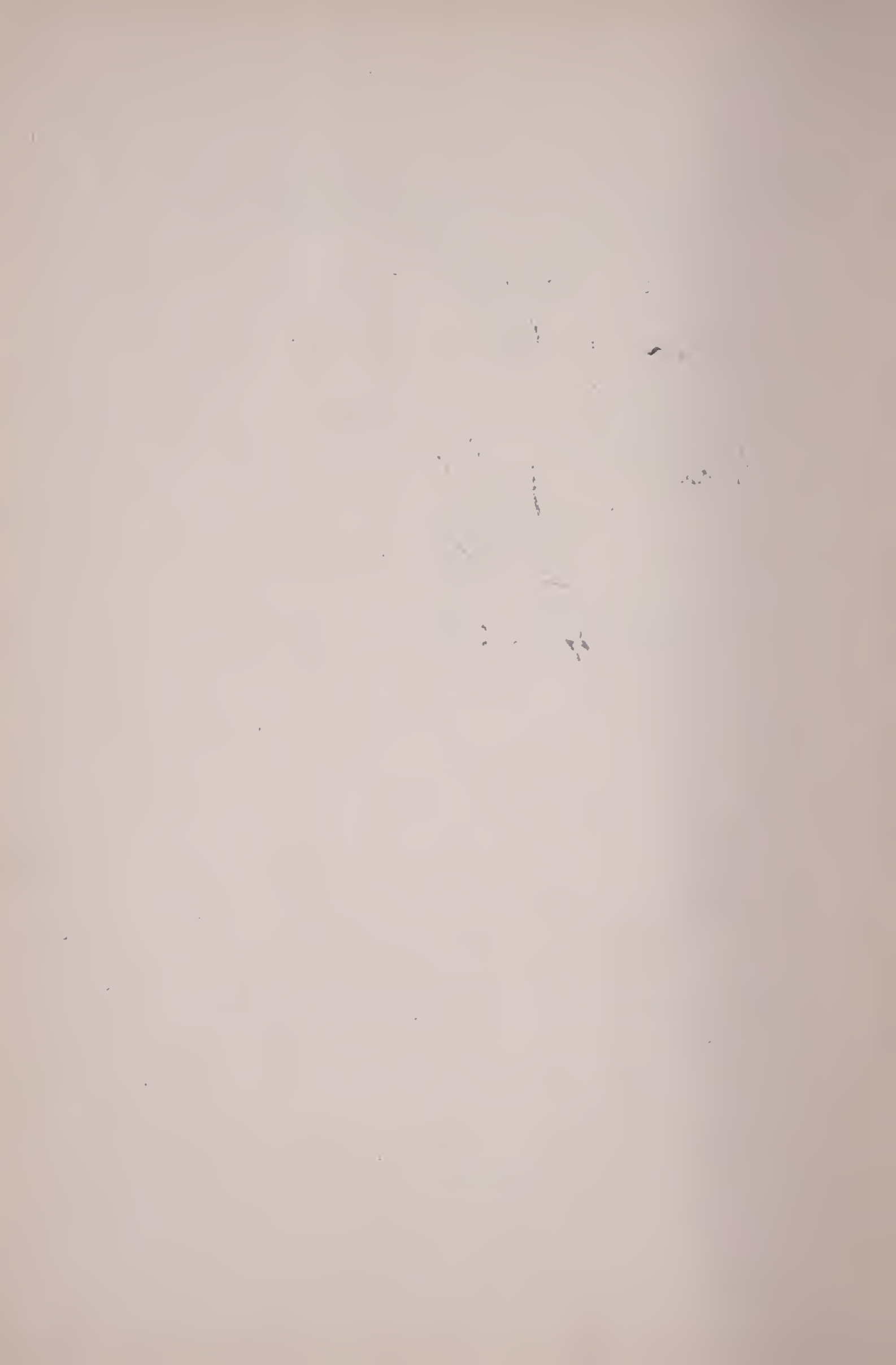
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FERNS, FOSSILS AND FUEL

Louise Marie Spaeth
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE AMONG STRANGE PEOPLES

James Westfall Thompson
THE LIVING PAST







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OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Marriage and Family Life
Among Strange Peoples

STUDIES OF ACTUAL SAVAGE LIFE



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MARRIAGE *and* FAMILY LIFE
among STRANGE PEOPLES



ONE

EARLY FORMS OF MARRIAGE

VEILED in mystery, the beginnings of human life have intrigued man throughout the ages. It has been a fertile subject for speculation, embodied in fanciful myth and imaginative poetry. Only in recent years, through the eyes of science, has man been able to seek a partial solution of this time-old mystery.

Delving into the crust of the earth, explorers have come upon fossil skeletal remains embedded by nature in geological strata. Archeologists have uncovered the remnants of human habitations and the tools and implements used by the early denizens of the earth. Such fragments are evidence of the material things men made and used, but they give no clue to the social forms of life in those prehistoric days. Family customs, religions, government, have left no record. Written history describing them covers only about six thousands years, a brief period in the million years or more that man has lived upon this globe. In the search for further in-

formation, we must turn to the crude savages or uncivilized tribes living today in various parts of the world.

Although these folk are our contemporaries, many of them have had only slight contact with higher civilizations or even with other primitive people. They have maintained their ancient customs almost unchanged. Even those who have come in contact with civilized peoples tend to cling to their traditional habits, and have changed very little during the long centuries. We can well believe that their ways of living are little different from the ways of their ancestors in the dim past before the dawn of history.

The scientists who concern themselves with the life of primitive peoples are called anthropologists. The word *anthropos* in Greek means "man"; anthropology, therefore, is the science of man. These scientists, after a thorough training, have gone to live, often for a long time, with primitive tribes in various parts of the world. They have studied the customs and habits of such people very carefully. They have revealed to us the great variety of ways in which man, in different parts of the world, and at different times, has woven his life pattern.

Anthropologists speak of all the habits that man has acquired or learned as his culture. In that sense, everybody has a culture—the Eskimo, the American Indian,

the Bushman, or the Hottentot, as well as the highly civilized and educated man. They also distinguish between historic peoples, who have left written records of their life, and primitive or pre-literate peoples who have left no such records.

In general, a people's habits are bound up with certain activities which is called their culture pattern. This "pattern" includes the kind of family life they have, and the material things they have learned to make and use. It embraces their organization for economic pursuits and for the regulation and control of other aspects of their life together. Their language, their art, their religion, and their means of defending themselves or of making war are all parts of their culture pattern.

Although most of our ideas about primitive peoples have had to undergo a thorough overhauling in the face of actual investigations of their customs, no more surprising and revolutionary discoveries have been revealed than those concerning their marriage forms and family life. Nearly all our popular conceptions of primitive marriage have gone by the board, completely discredited by the new facts disclosed in the careful studies of anthropologists. Nowhere have they found people living without some kind of family organization, though the type may differ widely from the one we are familiar

with. The lowliest people often have a more minutely regulated form of marriage than our own. Nowhere has been found the freedom from restraint which we have imagined savages possessed in this respect. No tribe has been discovered living in sexual promiscuity. The sexual freedom which many permit within definite groups before marriage always ceases when marriage takes place. Marriage for them usually becomes a relationship as chaste as our own and more conventional.

Mankind has experimented chiefly with two types of marriage—monogamy and polygamy. By monogamy we mean a family system like our own, in which a more or less permanent union with one person is prescribed. Polygamy is a system in which either a man has many wives or a woman many husbands. When the woman has more than one husband at a time, we call the arrangement polyandry. When the man has several wives at once, we call it polygyny.

For a long time modern Europeans and Americans have supposed monogamy to be the last and highest step in the development of human marriage. It has been their belief that it appeared only in the comparatively civilized group and that the less civilized a people were, the more husbands or wives they might have and the looser their family organization would be. The idea

prevailed that if one could only go back far enough in history, he would find the family disappearing completely. Savages, according to this idea, mated promiscuously like animals. Wherever the monogamic family existed, it was considered a development from a previous condition of polygamy; and, before that, of sex-communism and promiscuity.

Anthropologists have found this neat progression, so flattering to man's self-esteem, a theory which the facts do not support. They find, for instance, that strict monogamy prevails among the Andaman Islanders, a people in an extremely low state of culture. Yet history tells us that polygamy has flourished among comparatively highly civilized peoples. The Hebrews of Old Testament times had plural wives, and so did the Greeks of Homer's day. It was the custom among historic peoples as well as among pre-literate groups. Anthropologists now recognize the fact that a great variety of types or patterns of marriage have existed in the past and exist now, side by side in point of time.

Even where polygamy is permitted, it is never possible for all the men to have more than one wife, or all the women to have more than one husband, as the case may be. Males and females born in all human societies are approximately equal in number, so that in most tribes

if one man has two wives, another man must go without any wife. When something upsets this equality, such as the dangerous life of the men of some Eskimo tribes, with an excess of women as a result, or the practice of girl infanticide, which produces more men than women, in such tribes as the Todas, who live in southern India, we often find polygyny or polyandry. The Wahumas of East Africa, another tribe that kills many of its girl babies, solve the problem of excess men by permitting several brothers to share the same wife. This is a common form of polyandry, though it terminates among the Wahumas when the woman bears her first child. The eldest brother then automatically becomes the exclusive husband, and the other brothers must find themselves another wife.

All the tribes who kill a certain proportion of their girl babies do not practice polyandry, nor do all the tribes where there is an excess of women practice polygyny. Consequently it is impossible to make any hard and fast generalization concerning the relationship between the ratio of the sexes and the form of marriage customary in a tribe. Probably the traditional form of polygamous marriage in a particular tribe originated in some disturbance of the ratio between the sexes and continued long after these special conditions had vanished.

Where polygyny is customary, as among the Chukchi of Siberia, some North American Indians, many African tribes, and innumerable others, every man in the tribe does not have several wives. A number of wives is a privilege only the rich and successful men can afford. The second wife of such a man is, indeed, often chosen at the request of the first. A successful man in a primitive tribe gives many feasts and entertainments, and as with us, his wife must do most of the hard work in preparing them. Slaves or servants frequently are unknown in such tribes; so the first wife asks her husband to marry another woman to help her with the family duties. When this takes place, the second wife often must serve the first, who retains a higher rank in the household.

Such an arrangement does not cause the jealousy or emotional disturbances it would in our monogamic family system. The prestige and rank of the first wife are not diminished by the presence of a second or third wife, and so she does not resent them. An exception to this custom is found among the Omaha Indians, where all wives are of the same rank. Here, the second wife is usually a sister or other relative of the first, and little friction results. But such a situation is infrequent among the Omaha, who are a monogamous tribe except in the case of the richest men and chiefs.

Wide variations exist as to the degrees to which polygamy is practiced in any primitive people which permits it. Often the theory and its practice are different. Things which are sanctioned by the tribal customs are not done as a matter of everyday living. As a result, we find that polygyny or polyandry is rarely the only form of marriage, but that one or the other always exists simultaneously with some form of monogamy. Custom, to be sure, permits many wives or husbands, but the privilege is not universally accepted. As a matter of fact, monogamy prevails in the majority of primitive tribes.

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TWO

GETTING MARRIED IN A TRIBAL COMMUNITY

ENTERING into marriage, among the primitive peoples, is far from the free and easy arrangement that we have long regarded it. The business of getting oneself a wife is hedged about with innumerable restrictions, and regulated to the minutest detail. Whom a man cannot marry, whom he must or may marry, how he should go about choosing a wife—all these matters are prescribed with an exactness that might well astonish modern civilized people. And the ceremonies of courtship and marriage are often exceedingly elaborate.

The cave-man tactics, so widely believed to be the rule among primitive tribes, are, indeed, rarely sanctioned. The last thing that the average savage can do is to help himself to any woman in the tribe whom he fancies. Even marriage by the capture of a woman from another tribe, one of the favorite dreams of earlier speculation about primitive man, in cold reality plays an insignificant part. The North American Indians, who the white man thought

always captured their brides, have been found to marry almost entirely within their own tribes. Capture is frowned on because it leads to feuds which are highly undesirable, even in Indian civilization.

In some tribes, among the Koryak in Siberia, every marriage is marked by a fight between the groom and the bride's relatives. But this is only a convention and a test of the groom's ability to protect himself, and is not capture at all. Everybody's consent to the match has been obtained beforehand. Nearly every example we know of apparent marriage by capture has, on closer study, turned out in a like manner. It is merely a dramatization of capture that is a part of the wedding ceremony.

Instead of these high-handed methods, or the promiscuous acts which civilized people like to imagine as customary among savages, there is almost no freedom, in any primitive tribe, from an extensive body of conventions. Families often arrange the marriages, which are largely family affairs anyway. In many parts of the world there is infant betrothal. Among the Ewe tribes in Africa, it is even customary for a man to request in marriage the next daughter of a woman he likes—and he marries her when she has grown up.

The commonest and the strictest regulation in many tribes is against the marriage of close kin. Incestuous

GETTING MARRIED IN A TRIBAL COMMUNITY

marriage, as between brother and sister, or mother and son, is one of the most serious crimes that a member of such a tribe can commit. It is guarded against by all sorts of elaborate customs. The few tribes which do not have such restrictions are those in which there is a strong hereditary royal family, or a highly developed caste system. Where such a caste prevails, there may be no one of high enough rank for a man to marry except his own sister. Marriages of this sort were common until recent times among the royal families of the Hawaiians, and a few other peoples. But while such unions were customary among the ruling class, as in the case of some African tribes, they were never sanctioned among the common people.

Incestuous marriages, however, have not been confined to the rulers of certain primitive tribes; they are known to have existed among some historic peoples of high civilization. Cambyses, an ancient Persian king, married his sister; the famous Cleopatra of Egypt married her brother Ptolemy for reasons of state; and Abraham, of Bible fame, married his half-sister, Sarah.

Aside from such exceptions, the marriage of those related by kinship is prohibited among primitive tribes to an even greater degree than among civilized peoples, sometimes in ways that seem strange to the latter. The

restrictions, for instance, may extend to a whole tribe or clan. Violations of the regulations against such marriages are often punishable by death. The Andaman Islanders, who are among the most primitive of human beings, object to the marriage of even the most remote kin.

A common restriction, found in various parts of the world, prescribes which cousins may marry and which may not. The children of a brother may marry the children of his sister. Such cousins are called "cross cousins." But the children of brothers may not marry, nor may the children of sisters. Such cousins are called "parallel cousins" or "siblings." They look upon each other as brother and sister rather than as cousins. In some places the rule is obligatory that cross cousins *must* marry, while other tribes merely prefer such an arrangement but do not insist on it in every case. Peoples who maintain this peculiar restriction are found in Melanesia, Fiji, southern Asia, northwestern America, Nicaragua, and South and East Africa.

Another common type of regulation requires a man to marry the younger sister of his wife when the latter dies. This is called the *sororate*. It sometimes extends even further, so that when a man marries he becomes the potential, and in some cases the actual, husband of all his wife's younger sisters.

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The reverse situation also holds in some tribes. A widow must marry the next younger brother of her dead husband, even though she is a generation older than he. This is known as the *levirate*. The sororate and the levirate may occur together. In some tribes either form may be compulsory, in others, only recommended.

Many tribes also require that all marriages be outside the group, be it tribe, clan, or village, usually on the theory that all members of the group are too closely related for marriage. This practice is called *exogamy*. On the other hand, some tribes require that all marriages be within the group. This is called *endogamy*.

Marriage in primitive peoples is not so much a romantic union of individuals as a contract or arrangement between families. The parents either arrange the marriage entirely or play a large part in the proceedings after the bride has been chosen. Sometimes the parents even go so far as to arrange a double union, in which the son and daughter of one family marry the son and daughter of the other family, the betrothal taking place before the children are out of their cradles. But this exchange of a son for a son-in-law and a daughter for a daughter-in-law is rather rare.

Purchasing the bride is a far more common practice. There are many tribes where she is bought and paid for

by the groom and his family. Countless complicated variations of this method of getting a wife exist. Among the Kirghiz of Siberia, a Turkish tribe, a father arranges for the purchase of a wife for his son before the latter is ten years old. He at once begins to accumulate the enormous bride-price of eighty head of cattle, which he pays on the installment plan. A considerable number of installments must be made before the boy is even allowed to see his future wife. The marriage does not take place until the price is paid in full. As a result of this custom, girls are very valuable among the Kirghiz. The greatest blessing the gods can bestow upon a man is a large family of daughters.

Where brides are so expensive, polygyny is rather infrequent. Divorces also are few, for not many men can afford to pay a high price for a wife and then lose his whole investment by divorcing her.

The Kai of Papua in New Guinea do not pay the bride-price to the girl's father but to her brothers and maternal uncles. Boars' tusks, a hog, and other valuables form the payment; the father is compensated by a small amount of labor from the prospective son-in-law. As in many other tribes, the groom's family helps to make the payment, and the wife is inherited by her husband's brothers and other kinsmen when he dies. If she elopes with

some other man, as sometimes happens, the marriage-payment must be returned to the family of the affronted husband. Though the wife herself is inherited by her husband's family, her property is not, and any children born to them belong to her people.

Among the Thonga of South Africa, the price for a bride is usually several head of cattle and some hoes. The levirate prevails among them. The wife is inherited by a member of her husband's family, and the children are also his. If she dies childless, he gets his money back, on the ground that she was of no use to him. The bride-price is paid in installments; sometimes the marriage takes place before the woman is completely paid for. If something is still owing when she dies, the children become a mortgage. They belong to her family until the price is paid up. More than one wife is quite rare, for few men can ever accumulate the price for a second.

The Indian tribes of the northwest coast of America, such as the Klamath, the Hidatsa, the Shasta, and the Yurok, place great emphasis on the price they pay for their wives. A woman who has not been bought has neither social standing nor worth in the tribe, and the amount paid for a woman determines the family's social position. Only chaste women are bought—a great in-

ducement to morality in the younger women of the tribe. When women quarrel, they taunt each other with the low price for which they were purchased, and even the children boast of the prices that were paid for their respective mothers.

The Shasta arrange for a marriage and agree on the price before the children who are to be married reach adolescence. The relatives of the future groom help gather the required sum, which consists of beads and *dentalia*, or shells that look like bears' teeth. As a result, all the brothers of the groom have a financial interest in the bride, and both the levirate and the sororate are compulsory. Daughters are highly prized. A man who has several may easily become wealthy in the business of marrying them off. If a woman does not like her husband, she has the right to go home to her family after she has had three or four children. She has then performed a sufficient return for the money that was paid for her.

There are numerous other ways, in most tribes, of getting a wife besides buying her. Purchase is usually considered the most respectable way, but not everyone in a tribe may follow this plan, any more than every man in a polygynous tribe has several wives. The Crow Indians of Montana, for instance, can marry in any of sev-

eral ways and have the marriage recognized as legal. However, purchase is always the ideal and most honorable way, and only virtuous girls are ever bought. A Crow can also make a purely love match, and contract a permanent marriage without paying any price for his wife. This kind of marriage falls considerably short of the ideal, and the participants are not as highly regarded socially; nevertheless many such marriages take place. The Crow are somewhat lax in their restrictions on the conduct of young girls and men. Many a love affair develops at their seasonal festivals, in what to us would seem a highly unconventional manner. A Crow man may also have to marry his brother's widow, or the younger sister of his first wife; for the sororate is compulsory. At certain times of the year he may also capture a woman from an alien tribe. At other seasons, the tribe itself holds contests in which the wife of the defeated participant goes to the victor, if he wants her.

Buying a wife is often so complicated a procedure that it is difficult to distinguish it from the elaborate exchange of gifts and courtesies which usually takes place at every primitive wedding. Quite often, services to the future father-in-law are not considered payments for the bride; they are but tests of the groom's endurance and fitness to support a wife. It frequently is hard to distinguish be-

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tween peoples who have out-and-out purchase and those who mark a wedding by the ceremonial exchange of gifts, and the performance of services.

Among the Chinook, a northwest Indian tribe in America, when a man marries a girl from a different village, the ceremonies and visits between the two families last for months. The relatives of the groom go to the girl's village to "buy" her and make many gifts of dentalia, which her father divides among all his relatives. The bride then goes on a visit to her fiancé's home, and her family returns the gifts or purchase money, with more dentalia and even slaves. These visits, back and forth, with accompanying gifts, go on for months and even years. They usually do not end until the first child is born to the young couple.

The Kwakiutl Indians of Vancouver Island go to an almost incredible extreme of ceremonial when a marriage takes place. They are a wealthier tribe than the Chinook, and are called the "capitalists of the north." They have a rigid caste system of nobles, commoners, and slaves. Men of the middle class often buy rank through marriage with women of title. The marriage ceremonies begin with the sending of four men from the groom's family to determine the "price" of the woman he wishes to marry. They distribute blankets among

her relatives. The prospective groom is then put through an elaborate series of tests to prove his fitness. A wealthy man, however, especially if he is favored by the girl's family, can hire a substitute to take these tests for him. After he is accepted, repeated visits and exchanges of gifts go on between the two families. They last for six months. Not until they are all over is the marriage complete according to the tribal code.

All these tribes frown severely on any violations of the elaborate conventions which surround their marriages.

Though marriage among most peoples is an established procedure with every step in the proceedings prescribed by tribal tradition, definite and separate methods exist in many cases by which a young man may indicate his preference for a certain girl, or she for him. There are numerous courtship customs which show plainly that romantic love, as we know it, may stir the savage bosom. Some tribes provide for the elopement of two young people, if family pressure on them is too great. The Chinook consent to the marriage of a couple who have eloped three times in spite of their parents' opposition. Suicide, for the Klamath woman, is the way of escape from a thwarted love.

A Chinook man carves symbols on the trees which he hopes the girl he loves will see and understand. The

women of the Yukaghir in Siberia express their love with symbolic scrolls on birch bark. A Cheyenne Indian was expected to court a girl for five years. The Trobriand Islanders use love potions and magic formulae to obtain the love of a desired person of the opposite sex.

The Omaha Indians strictly prohibit the free association of their youths and maidens. Yet their tribal customs provide for the expression of romantic love in courtship, and so make possible marriages based on mutual affection. The young suitor makes known his presence to the girl he courts by playing a melody composed for the occasion on his flute. If the girl is inclined to favor him, she slips silently away from the family circle in the lodge and meets him outside. Lovers may also exchange a few words near the community spring. Although the girl is never allowed to fetch water unless accompanied by some other woman, she manages to lag behind her companion when she hears her lover's flute, and the two steal a few moments together. Friendship between two boys or two girls also plays an important part in the courtship. It is often the suitor's intimate friend who acts as a go-between to secure an interview with the girl his friend wishes to marry. If she favors the suit, the young man himself appears before her parents and pleads for her hand. If the girl's father accepts him, his

family immediately makes presents to all her relatives, which her family reciprocate. Many feasts accompany the exchange of presents. After the marriage, the bridegroom must work a year for his father-in-law to prove his fitness to be a husband. If the family of either objects to the marriage, it does not thereby become impossible, but there are no feasts or gifts.

A Zuñi Indian youth makes his own choice of bride. If the match is agreeable to the young woman's family, he pays them a visit lasting several days. The girl's father lectures him on his duties as a husband, and her mother asks him to be kind and good to his wife. After the visit, the young man informs his own parents of his acceptance. If they approve, a dress is sent as a gift to the bride. This present begins an exchange of gifts and feasts, which constitutes the wedding ceremony.

In a number of Australian tribes, an engagement is publicly announced at a tribal gathering. The girl wears a necklace as a sign of the betrothal. The wedding is often accompanied by magic-religious ceremonies purporting to give supernatural sanction to the marriage.



THREE

PRIMITIVE FAMILY LIFE

IN FEW primitive tribes does marriage bring with it any lessening in the restrictions that surround the individual's life. The tribal institutions and conventions are just as numerous and binding on married people as they are on unmarried members. Where the couple shall live, how they shall support themselves, or who must support them, what work each must do in connection with the new home, and what property each can own, are definitely prescribed among every primitive people.

Such customs differ in the various tribes throughout the world. They are so closely interwoven with the whole culture pattern of the individual tribe that it is extremely difficult to separate the family conventions from those connected with the economic or political structure. Often the reason for a particular family arrangement lies in some peculiar economic factor in the tribe's life or in its religious beliefs. The practices are so different from our own that it is doubly hard to understand them with-

out a knowledge of the economic, religious, and political background of the tribe we are examining. And no matter how crude and simple a primitive people may be, there are always strict regulations on the family and its life. Every tribe has evolved some solution of the problem of living together that is in keeping with its conditions of life.

The place where a family lives and its economic support are often closely associated. In some tribes, it is customary for the husband to follow his wife to her mother's home, or to that of her family, even if it is in another village. The Zuñi men do so, and the husband remains a guest in his mother-in-law's house throughout his married life. A Zuñi household consists of the mother, all the daughters, single and married, their husbands and children, and all the unmarried, divorced, or widowed sons. The married sons, of course, live at the homes of their mothers-in-law. The Zuñi man never completely separates himself from his own mother when he marries. He always keeps his most valued possessions, such as his ceremonial costumes and his prayer-sticks, at her house. When his wife dies or divorces him, he simply goes back to his mother's home, where he is always welcome.

An Omaha Indian husband also goes to live with his wife's family, but the arrangement is only a temporary

one. During the period he lives there, he has to work for his father-in-law to prove his worth. This service is not the working off of a bride-price, but a test of ability. When the first child is born, the period of service ends, and a separate household is set up.

Newly-weds among the Cheyenne Indians go to live in a lodge near the husband's father or uncle while a new home is being built for them. The groom's male relatives prepare the poles for the new tent, while the bride's female relatives make the skin covering, and the bride herself adorns it elaborately with her own handiwork. Where the new tent is to be set up is prescribed, usually a certain distance from her former home.

In certain Melanesian tribes the husband does not live in the hut with his wife, but in a men's club-house where all the men of the village reside. He goes home to eat the meals his wife prepares and serves him, and he visits her at night. The rest of his time is spent at "the Club." In these tribes, the men's secret societies and club-houses play a large part in the community life. Women are as strictly excluded as they are in our country from the lodges of Masons or Odd Fellows. In some tribes, such as the Hupa Indians, the women lived in club-houses apart from the men during the winter months.

Other tribes have residence arrangements that are com-

binations or variations of those just mentioned, while a large number of peoples require the setting up of a separate household, as we do, as soon as a couple is married.

Division of labor between man and wife in a primitive family differs in every tribe. It is frequently as illogical as our own. Earlier students, through careless observation and lack of understanding of the tribal culture, led us to believe that in more primitive tribes, a natural division of labor on a purely physiological basis was observed. In a completely savage tribe, the women were supposed to do only the work for which they were best fitted physically. This theory has been found to be another illusion. The reasons why women do one kind of work and men another usually lie in cultural factors rather than in a recognition of what each is best able to do.

The men of a tribe usually do the hunting and fishing, though there are several exceptions, while the women gather the acorns, roots, and vegetable products which are nearly always the staple part of the family's food. Women seem to have been the first agriculturists, and even today we find that where the digging-stick or hoe has not been supplanted by the plow, agriculture is carried on almost entirely by them. Pulling weeds is usually their job, and clearing the land and building fences the

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men's. In some tribes, among them the Andaman Islanders, the work of the fields and gardens is shared by the men and women equally.

The task of carrying water is nearly always left to the women of the tribe, though it is often important and arduous. Women usually prepare and cook the food, though in some tribes the men help on special occasions. Among the Samoans, the young men build the ovens, and do most of the heavy work of the cooking, but the women always help both in preparing the food for cooking and in cooking it. In tribes where the unmarried men live in their own club-houses, they cook all of their own food.

The women always care for the dwelling, and in some cases even help in building it. The Pueblo Indian women plaster the walls of a house by hand, after the men have built the foundations and put up the scaffolding. The Sioux and Cheyenne women helped to build the teepees.

Women in all tribes were the first potters, though it is curious to find that where the use of the wheel in making pottery is known the men have always taken over the work. Only where pottery is made by hand is it the work of the women in the tribe.

Clothing and ornaments are made by both men and

women in most tribes. Usually each makes his or her own belongings. The women of the Trobriand Islands make their own grass skirts, and the men their brief garments. The men also make their ceremonial costumes, masks, and ear and arm ornaments, and keep them in order and repair. It is rarely the woman's duty to care for her husband's personal possessions.

In the American Indian tribes, the women usually make and decorate the skin garments for themselves and their husbands. Where the making of textiles is known, sometimes the women do the weaving and spinning, as among the Navaho, while in other tribes such as their neighbors, the Hopi Indians, the men weave and spin. Ordinarily, spinning is women's work (whence the word *spinster* for an unmarried woman) and weaving is work for the men.

In pastoral tribes that have learned to domesticate and herd animals, the women's share of the work also varies greatly. The Hottentots of South Africa consider men and women equal and permit them to do the same work; the Bantu, another South African people, consider women inferior and restrict their part in the tribal work. The women of the Chukchi of Siberia often take care of the reindeer herds, and do all of the skinning and butchering in addition to the household work. Other

cattle peoples will not permit their women to come near the animals because they believe the welfare of the cattle and the quality of the dairy products will be endangered through the evil magic a woman's presence and contact exert.

Religious beliefs of many tribes account for the particular types of work women are not permitted to do. In such tribes, the physiological characteristics of women in connection with child-birth are but vaguely understood. An air of mystery has been created about them which has led to many strange rituals, and rules of avoidance, called *taboos*. The people who consider women "unclean" and dangerous exclude them from participation in many activities. The Todas of India will not allow them near the sacred cattle; likewise, the Kaffirs of Africa keep them away from the herds. There is a wide variety of similar regulations in tribes in every part of the world.

It is on the background of such beliefs and traditions of the tribe that woman's position in it depends. Whether her position is that of an equal or an inferior cannot be determined by the stage of civilization which the tribe has reached, or by her usefulness. Often the most primitive tribes consider men and women equal, while others, whose culture is more advanced in other respects,

regard women as property to be bought and sold according to the whim of the men who own them.

But even in such tribes, women's lot is not always so black as it seems. Although her husband has the right to sell her or give her away or lend her to a stranger as a gesture of hospitality, he frequently does not exercise it. She is often kindly and affectionately treated as a wife, and genuinely mourned when she dies.

Closely coöperative family and social life prevails in nearly all primitive groups and has a tremendous effect on a husband's treatment of his wife. The approval of the rest of the tribe is of vital importance to its individual member, and his family life is an open book to the whole village. The inhabitants of our small towns have much greater privacy. Tribal opinion, which everywhere frowns on force and violence in the domestic circle, is a potent check on a man's behavior. The close family relationships in most tribes are another restraining influence. Australian tribes, where the position of women is extremely low, have the habit of exchanging sisters in marriage making it possible for a man to say to his brother-in-law, "If you beat my sister, I will beat my wife, who is your sister." In tribes like the Zuñi Indians, where the husband lives with his wife's mother and sisters, he would think twice before bringing down the wrath

of the whole household on his head by mistreating her. Though the man is master in his own family, his treatment of his wife, no matter how inferior women may be regarded in the tribe, is never completely uncontrolled.

Where there is a tribal caste system, the problem of a woman's rank after marriage has an infinite number of solutions. Among the Samoans, her rank can never be higher than her husband's, even if her family is. Alliances of high-caste women with commoners are rather infrequent, for few women care to give up their noble rank. Among the Trobriand Islanders, on the other hand, a high-caste woman retains her rank when she marries a commoner, and he must crawl before her in public and observe all the other ceremonies due to one of higher rank in her presence.

Nearly everywhere, popular belief to the contrary notwithstanding, the husband (or husbands, if the tribe is polyandrous) has exclusive sexual prerogatives over his wife. He expects strict fidelity on her part after marriage, no matter what degree of license was permitted her before it. Only in tribes where it is customary to lend one's wife to a visitor is she ever supposed to bestow her favor on anyone but her husband. Of course the rules of fidelity are covertly disregarded among primitive peoples just as they are in our own society, but such con-

duct is always illicit and is always regarded with scorn and disapproval by the respectable members of the tribe, if it becomes known.

Nearly all investigators who have lived with a primitive tribe for any length of time have commented on the orderliness of their family life, the mutual friendliness and politeness of members of a family to each other, and the modesty of their behavior. The people of a savage tribe seem to live up to their customary codes to a surprising degree of faithfulness.

In some tribes the influence and authority of the women in the community life outside the home are unusually large. This circumstance, together with the fact that descent is reckoned in such tribes through the female line and property is inherited through the women, for a long time led anthropologists to believe that the women also controlled the tribal government and councils. Such communities, in which the women were supposed to be the rulers, were called matriarchates. The best-known people who were thought to live under such a system were the Iroquois Indians. Among them, the matrons of the tribe elected the men who sat in the tribal councils, and could depose them. Furthermore, the tribal chieftainship was hereditary in the maternal line. But the women themselves were never members of the councils.

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The Ashanti in Africa, where the queen-mother has the most to say in choice of a new chief when the old one dies, were thought to be another such tribe. Here again, no woman was ever chosen chief. On the other hand, the Zuñi Indians, who also reckon descent in the female line and inherit property through the mother, permit their women to play only a small part in the community life. The series of ceremonials associated with it are almost entirely in the hands of the men.

Closer examination of all the tribes where the matriarchate was believed to exist has shown that while the women have unusual powers and influence, according to our ideas, in none of them have they ever exercised complete control over the community life. Their opinion on matters concerning the tribal welfare is highly respected in many tribes, but the matriarchate, in its strict meaning of a tribe ruled by the women alone, does not and never did exist. Women's influence is sometimes powerful, but they are never the sole rulers, even in primitive tribes.

Property rights among tribal folk constitute another interesting field of study. The kinds of property that may be owned by the individual members of the family, or by the family as a whole, are always intricately interwoven with the entire economic and social structure of

a particular people. Every tribe has its own conceptions of property rights. What the family owns, what the wife and husband own, or what the children own, and what each may inherit from the others are clearly defined and jealously observed.

The right of women to own property is nowhere denied, even though their position is that of inferiors, or where they are even regarded as property themselves. The property-rights of children are everywhere as strictly respected as those of adults. This feature of primitive life frequently astonishes travelers. When they try to buy a savage child's toy, which is often a miniature reproduction of something used by the adults of the tribe, to exhibit in our museums, they find that the child-owner is always consulted. If he refuses to sell or give away his toy, his parents make no effort to coax or force him to part with it. The traveler has to go empty-handed, no matter what payment he has offered, if the little owner is adamant.

It was once thought that tribal folk did not recognize the right of individuals to hold private property at all, but owned everything in common. Community ownership, or ownership of property by groups, had been observed in many tribes, and the erroneous conclusion arose that everything was owned in that manner. We know

now that private property is recognized by primitive peoples everywhere, though many have some variety of community ownership as well. The principles of justice and fine discrimination in the rights of individuals that lie at the foundation of the various systems of property ownership among primitive peoples are often a cause for marvel by a civilized man. There is private property in land, in movable objects, and in such intangibles as songs, magical formulas, and legends. The Plains Indians of North America even looked upon visions as private property. In some Melanesian tribes, people may own fruit trees that grow on someone else's land.

Most primitive peoples recognize two principle ways of acquiring property. Certain kinds of things are owned by virtue of one's membership in a tribe or clan or family. To other kinds one gets a claim by contributing one's labor.

Where there is a caste system, as in Polynesia, the noblemen may hold land by right of conquest or inheritance, and the serfs or slaves can never own it or even hold it in fief. In some African tribes which have a strong monarchical form of government, the king or chief owns all the land, and members of the tribe hold it in fief from him, just as was the case in feudal Europe. The holder of the fief, who cultivates it, is always entitled

to the crops. This right is unquestioned even if the holder is a woman, though in such tribes women themselves are regarded as property.

In most North American Indian tribes, the community organization was along somewhat democratic lines. There were a few exceptions, such as the Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island and the Natchez of Mississippi, both of whom had strong hereditary castes of nobles, commoners, and slaves, and drew a sharp line between the rich and the poor. But as a rule, land was held in common by the tribe or clan. Individuals had a right to plots of land only for cultivation. A man held his plot for use. If he did not cultivate it, it reverted to the tribe, to be reassigned to someone who would.

Hunting and fishing territories were often owned in a similar manner. The products of the hunt or fishing expedition were divided among those participating in it. Plains Indians organized the entire tribe for a buffalo hunt, and during it the members were subject to almost military discipline to assure success. The welfare of the whole tribe was involved in the undertaking, and the kill was divided equally among the members. A tribe considered itself owner of all the extensive area which the hunt covered.

Land that was not owned communally in most Amer-

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can Indian tribes was owned by families or clans. In some tribes such as the Hopi and the Zuñi, both the ownership of land and its inheritance are vested in the women. Descent is reckoned through the mother, and the house or pueblo in which the family lives is hers, and is inherited by her daughters. The men are completely excluded from ownership of either houses or fields, and pass their lives as guests in the homes of their wives or mothers.

As a rule primitive peoples do not accumulate property or hoard wealth as we do, for their culture pattern has no use for amassed capital and offers no incentive to its acquisition. Often the only prestige attached to wealth lies in giving it away in feasts and display. The richest man in a village is usually chief, as among the Trobriand Islanders, but his chieftainship is largely dependent on the feasts and entertainments he gives. In some Eskimo tribes the most prominent man is the one who is most generous, who shares most fully what he has. In American Indian tribes, the lavish giving away of horses and blankets was expected of a successful chief.

Men of some Melanesian tribes sometimes try to accumulate property in order to give feasts in honor of their dead, and thus insure to themselves the power the spirits can bestow on their living descendants.

Property in such things as land and dwelling places is

rarely inherited from a husband by his wife, or vice versa, for its ownership is usually a family affair. A man or a woman has a right to it on marriage only by virtue of membership in the family which owns it. When the marriage is dissolved by death, there can be no transfer of such property, which continues in the family according to the tribal codes.

Personal belongings, such as tools, weapons, pottery, blankets, clothing, ornaments, and ceremonial masks or costumes, are about the only kind of property a savage can dispose of as he wishes. The customs of some tribes even require that these things be buried with the owner or burned at his death. The problem of who inherits them is then automatically settled. In any event, a man's personal property would be of little use to his wife or hers to him. Some kinds of possessions occasionally go to a nephew or niece. The family contract, which a marriage is in most tribes, leaves the husband or wife primarily a member of his or her own family in matters of inheritance. They inherit property only from the family to which they belong by blood, almost never from each other.

The family itself in primitive tribes is often a much broader and looser group than it is in our own society. Family relationships are much different. We are ac-

customed to think of a family as the biologic unit of mother, father, and children, with an occasional mother-in-law or grandfather, making a small, exclusive group living in a separate household. The primitive family often consists of a much larger group of persons, related by both blood and marriage, all living together in a single residence. It may, on the other hand, present the opposite extreme of almost no family life at all, as in the Melanesian tribes where the husband only eats at home and visits his wife at night.

A household like that of the Zuñi Indians, which consists of the mother and her husband, all the daughters with their husbands and children, and the unmarried, divorced, or widowed sons, is not uncommon. Samoan tribes have an even looser family group. They reckon descent through the father, and the sons bring their wives to live in his house. The grandchildren grow up there; and, in addition, the children of other relatives frequently come to stay in the household. A Samoan child may really choose his home. If he is unhappy with his own parents because of some uncongenial restraint or some resentment toward them or other adults in their household, he simply goes away to live in the home of other relatives. He is always made welcome anywhere he goes and may stay as long as he pleases.

Such flexible residence arrangements throw together in the close association of daily living a heterogeneous group of people, some blood relations of various degrees, others that are related only by marriage. Consequently, the tribal conventions usually regulate very strictly the behavior of the various members of the kinship group toward each other. Rules of avoidance, or taboos, must be observed between certain persons in the family. Other members may be on most familiar terms. Often a son-in-law must never speak to his mother-in-law, or a father-in-law to his daughter-in-law, and neither may use the other's name in speaking of him or her. A Navaho Indian man must never be in the room with his mother-in-law. In some African tribes he even sends a messenger to the village where his mother-in-law lives to warn her of an impending visit, thus preventing a chance meeting.

Frequently an elder brother or a male cousin may not speak to the wife of a younger brother or cousin, or they may do so only through an intermediary. Sometimes an elder brother may not speak to the wife of a younger sister's son. In some tribes, brother and sister may not speak to each other directly, but only through a third person; or blood brothers may not talk together freely, but must confine themselves to formal speech and impersonal topics. Elsewhere, a father must not eat with

his son, and brother and sister must never look at one another. In some tribes a husband may call his wife by name, but she may not speak his. The regulations even extend to the subjects one may discuss in the presence of a person one must avoid because of taboos.

Such taboos usually apply between those in a household who can never, under any circumstances, be prospective mates according to the tribal rules. They are apparently part of the tribe's precautions against the faintest shadow of incestuous relationships. They make daily life in the family extraordinarily complicated, until it would seem to us that no one person could remember all the minute regulations that surround his every waking moment. But violation of any of them, even inadvertently, is a serious breach of conduct that will bring down the contempt of the whole village on the unlucky offender's head.

In marked contrast to this rigidly prescribed behavior is the great familiarity that is permitted between other members of the family group. People of certain degrees of relationship, even of opposite sex, exercise a freedom of speech and of person that far exceeds what we should consider good taste. The liberties common between the men and women of a kin group who are possible mates under tribal code are frequently as extreme as the taboo. A

man who must behave circumspectly with his mother-in-law or his sister, may converse freely, on subjects that would cause a blush to rise to our cheeks, with his wife's younger sister or his brother's wife, where the levirate or sororate is customary.

All these regulations of behavior and customs of residence give the married relationship and the family life of a tribal couple a different character from that of ours. Where a man does not live in the same house with his wife, or a brother and sister may not speak to one another, the relationships between the members of a family obviously cannot be the close-knit emotional ties customary in our own life. A family becomes a large social group, including many persons bound together by more or less remote ties of kindred. Naturally, therefore, its personal and affectionate aspects will be different.

Since marriage is so largely a family contract and alliance, divorce in primitive communities has the same character. It is possible in every tribe, and it is relatively simple compared with our legal procedure, but the ease or difficulty of dissolving a marriage is influenced by the terms of the marriage agreement in the particular tribe.

A primitive marriage means primarily the founding of a family; so sterility is everywhere recognized as a cause for divorce. If there are children, the question of

their support or of the support of the mother does not complicate matters, as they do with us. A woman is always welcome at her own family's home if she has been deprived of her husband, and tribal custom nearly always decrees to which family the children belong even when divorce does not take place.

In many tribes, the woman is never dependent on her husband, and a divorce makes no disrupting change whatever. Among the Trobriand Islanders, as well as many other tribes, a woman is always supported by her father and brothers, and her husband's work is to support his sisters. Among the Hopi and Zuñi Indians, where the women own the houses and fields, divorce is a simple matter. A woman who decides that her married life is no longer desirable has only to indicate that fact to her husband. If a Hopi woman fails to thank her husband when he returns from his labor in the fields, he understands that his work for her is no longer appreciated. He has no choice but to go home to his mother. A Zuñi man may come home to find some of his personal belongings greeting him at the door. This is his wife's tactful way of telling him that she is tired of living with him. He returns to the home of his mother and sisters, where he is always welcome. In both tribes, the children belong to the wife's family; since descent is

through the female line, and they remain with her. In Samoa, where children are always welcome at the homes of relatives anyway, the separation of its parents gives a child two homes instead of one.

Where a heavy bride-price has been paid by the members of the husband's family, which must be returned to them in case of divorce, the matter is more difficult. The families will try to preserve the marriage, and divorces are rather infrequent. Among the Shasta Indians of the northwest coast, where purchase is customary, a woman can leave her husband after she has had three or four children, for she is then considered to have at least equalled the investment of her bride-price. Other tribes where the bride is purchased have similar arrangements. Even where divorce is discouraged, however, a woman is never compelled to live with a man she dislikes or who mistreats her. As we have seen, primitive people universally frown on the use of force in domestic relationships, and no woman is required to submit to it. Divorce merely consists in the injured person's taking his or her possessions and returning to his or her own family.



FOUR

WHEN A CHILD IS BORN

THE birth of a child to a tribal couple is always an important event in which the whole community is deeply interested. Birth and death alike make a great impression on the primitive mind, and both are met with elaborate ceremonial display. This is especially true of birth, which is surrounded with all sorts of complicated taboos and regulations to safeguard the new life from evil.

Not all peoples understand the physiological relationship between the father and the new child. Some believe that women conceive through some supernatural power, and the father is merely the husband of the woman who bears the child. But he has much the same sentiment toward the new-born child, in spite of this naïve belief, and performs much the same duties that a father does in our own society.

The Trobriand Islanders seem to have the belief that through some supernatural force concealed in a tree or a rock, a woman becomes aware that she is to have a

child. No amount of persuasion on the part of white visitors can convince them that a husband or any other man has anything to do with its conception. A man who has been away from his wife for two or three years on a trading expedition and comes home to find her with a new baby will refuse to be convinced that she has been unfaithful during his absence. An unmarried woman should not have children, in fact it is disgraceful for her to do so, but only because she has no husband to help her rear them.

Some Australian tribes have similar beliefs in the potency of trees, rocks, and other inanimate objects. The Arunta believe in a kind of reincarnation; the spirits of the dead inhabit certain places and a woman frequenting such a place runs the risk of becoming pregnant.

The Eskimos and some Siberian tribes also think that a new child is the reincarnation of some ancestor. The Koryak of Siberia even hold a divination ceremony to discover which ancestor has entered the soul of the baby, and name it accordingly. The Aztecs of Mexico also believed that an ancestral spirit was reborn in the child.

Everywhere the child receives important consideration. Its coming is prepared for with many precautions and by the observance of many taboos. Some Australian tribes, the Trobriand Islanders, and others, elaborately

recognize a woman's first pregnancy with a special series of rituals. Among the Trobrianders, her feet must not touch the ground; so she is carried from place to place and a mat laid for her to stand on. After a purifying bath, which is given her by the women of the tribe, she wears a white fiber robe to whiten her skin and keep the sun's rays from her body. She sits on a platform built in front of her hut during certain hours of the day, from three to five days, depending on her rank. Such advertising of a fact civilized women try to conceal as long as possible seems strange to us, but a Trobriand woman is proud when she becomes pregnant for the first time and wants the whole village to know about it.

An Aztec woman informed her family as soon as she discovered that she was to have her first child. They immediately gave a great feast to the entire village to celebrate the event. Gifts were exchanged, orations announcing the news, and prayers asking the blessing of the gods on the new being were made by everyone present, including the prospective mother herself. Another feast was held just before the child was born, at which the midwife made the principal address.

Besides the ceremonies that take place before the arrival of the first child, there are taboos and rules of conduct that have to be observed by both husband and wife

whenever a child is on the way. Their diet is nearly always rigidly regulated, especially the woman's. A woman of the Torres Straits, where the tribes are dependent chiefly on turtles for food, is forbidden to eat them or even to enter a house where they are being cooked, for her influence is thought to be unwholesome and dangerous. In the Trobriand Islands, a pregnant woman cannot eat certain kinds of fish, especially shell-fish. A Mohave woman never eats rabbit at this time, because of the belief that it will cause the child to have sores on its head. Judging from the number of children who have sores on their heads, there must be considerable disregard of this rule. In some tribes the husband refrains from hunting and killing certain animals for fear that his doing so might injure the child. In others he cannot do any heavy work during the last months because his exertions might hinder the process of child-bearing.

In many cases the pregnant woman no longer lives in the same dwelling as her husband, nor sleeps with him. She often goes home to her own family to stay during this period. In tribes where marriage must be outside the clan and the wife has left her native village for her husband's, it is often customary for her to return to her own home to give birth to the child.

Sometimes the separation of husband and wife lasts

long after the child is born. Kaffir couples do not live together until the child is weaned, and this is not until the child is three or four years old. Cheyenne Indian parents often did not have a second child until the first was ten years old, when they publicly announced that their child was going to have a sister or a brother. This type of self-control was considered praiseworthy by the tribe.

The custom of primitive mothers nursing their children for four or five years sometimes means prolonged continence for the husbands. Since it is often found with the practice of polygyny, where a man can simply turn to his other wives if custom requires that he must live apart from a woman until her child is weaned.

When the actual birth takes place, many tribes accord it ceremonial attention. On the other hand, some tribes allow the woman to retire into the bush alone and return later with the new-born child. Where there are ceremonies, the woman is generally expected to bear the ordeal with fortitude; any outcry is considered a disgrace. Usually either a special lying-in-hut is built for the expectant mother by her female relatives, or she retires into the bush accompanied by some of them or by a midwife. In Samoa, a birth takes place almost publicly. Anyone who is interested may be present, even children.

An Australian woman retires with a female relative into the bush, and returns carrying the child over her shoulder in an opossum skin or a mat. In Fiji, a professional midwife attends the woman in a hut erected for the event. Afterwards the hut is burned. An expectant mother among the Todas of India is isolated with her mother in a special hut several months before the child's birth actually takes place, so that she will not be near the sacred cattle which her "uncleanness" might injure. The central Eskimos also have a seclusion hut, of skins in summer and of ice in winter. The women of the Vedda of Ceylon retire into a cave; anyone may assist at the birth, for there are no professional midwives in the tribe. A Yao woman in Africa goes into the bush a few days before the child's birth, and builds a grass hut in which it is born. She is accompanied by a midwife who stays with her for five or six days, when they return to the village. Kaffir women also are secluded and attended by midwives.

Many of the practices and ceremonials intended to aid the mother and child are from our point of view both harmful and revolting. There is often ignorance of the progress of labor, and dangerous methods of forcing the birth are sometimes resorted to. If the birth is delayed, the female attendants perform magic rites such as loosen-

ing their clothing, untying knots, and similar futile acts. Among the Melanesian tribes of British New Guinea, the father is sent for in a case of prolonged labor to perform such helpful acts as opening boxes, untying his hair, and removing tight bracelets from his arms. They believe that by acts of this kind, which are a type of sympathetic magic, the obstacles to the child's delivery will be removed. If none of these remedies work, the woman simply dies.

The taboos on the father's and mother's conduct often continue for some time after the child's birth. As we have pointed out, the taboo of continence often lasts for years. Food taboos also continue for varying lengths of time, from a week in some tribes to a year in others. In the Banks Islands, a father must not work for a month after the child's birth. A Fiji father will not do any hard labor, such as lifting heavy weights or paddling a canoe, for some time. Some Melanesian mothers are restricted to a diet of boiled taro and the fruit of certain trees, for a month. If it is the first child, the father is not allowed to touch it until it is from five to eight months old. A central Eskimo mother must not eat raw flesh for a year, nor the flesh of any animal that has been shot through the heart. Any violations of the food taboos are thought to cause illness for the child.

In nearly all tribes both mother and child have to undergo some sort of purification rites. Sometimes the father, too, has to perform magic rites to ward off evil. In a few cases, the mother gets up and goes about her work almost at once, but the father goes to bed for a week or so. This custom, which is not yet perfectly understood, is followed among the Basques in Spain, a far from primitive people, as well as in certain tribes in Brazil and Borneo. It is called the *couvade*. The belief back of it, so far as investigators have been able to discover, seems to be that the father's behavior exercises some kind of sympathetic influence on the new-born child. He goes to bed to avoid doing anything that will harm it.

The new mother is usually bathed or treated with incense to purify her before she returns to the family circle. Sometimes she is steamed, or toasted over a small fire for a short time. In other tribes the rites consist of elaborate cleansing baths. The Yukaghir of Siberia both bathe and steam her four days after the child's birth. The woman may return to her household duties, but she must not touch any hunting or fishing implements or sleep with her husband for forty days.

Among other peoples, she either goes back to work and to her family almost immediately or she may have

a short period of rest, varying from a few days to several months. A Fiji woman's rest depends on her social position. The better class women take a month; in the families of chiefs, they do no domestic work for three months. Here, as everywhere else, including our own society, the low-class woman returns to her work as soon as she is able. In many cases the new-born child also receives treatment that seems revolting and stupid to civilized people. In some tribes it is wonderful that any babies survive. It is surely a case of "the survival of the fittest" when they do. Some give the child a cold bath a few hours after it is born. Others feed it ground food while its mother is being purified; then it can have its mother's milk—if it has lived. In Melanesia, it is even given ground shell; in Fiji, some kind of medicine to make it vomit so that it will start life with a clean stomach.

In many tribes, the mother must not feed her baby her own milk for several days after it is born. The child may either go without food entirely for this period, or it may be nursed by a female relative of the young mother. The Fijians give an infant to a wet nurse while its mother is being cleansed.

Some peoples pass a new baby through smoke or fire to ward off evil spirits; others hang strings around its

neck to accomplish the same purpose. In Samoa a child is fed for three days on the juice of cocoanut kernels.

The North American Indians contented themselves with wrapping the baby in the inner bark of cedar and putting it in a cradle on its mother's back. The Amazonian Indians' treatment is doubtless a great strain on the new-born infant. They submerge it immediately in a stream. A Kaffir baby is smoked in special medicines on the first day to impart to it the ancestral spirit.

In contrast to these strenuous and weird customs, the Chukchi of Siberia take excellent care of their infants. In some way they have even hit upon the perfect treatment for a prematurely-born baby. They place it in the soft skin of a sea-bird which has been taken off whole and turned feather side in, tie it up securely, and hang it over a lamp in which a small flame is kept burning.

In many tribes, all over the world, an attempt is made to mold the child's body from the beginning into certain tribal ideals of beauty. One of the most common is the flattening of the baby's head by means of boards fastened on in ways that will force it into the desired shape. The Aztecs followed this practice and the Chinook do it to their babies. Among the Salish Indians of the north-west coast, such flattening is a mark of distinction. Slaves are not allowed to practice it on their children.

The Arunta in Australia flatten their children's noses to make them, as they think, beautiful, and they pierce the septum of the nose for ornaments.

The arrival of a child is often the occasion for some sort of religious ceremonial. In parts of western Africa a public crier announces the fact that a child is born and claims for it a place in the community. The people of the village gather, and the head man of the town sprinkles water over the new baby, followed by everyone present. The poor child is thoroughly drenched before the ceremony is over. The Thonga of South Africa dedicate the child to the first new moon, to keep it from being stupid. Their neighbors, the Baganda, do the same to insure it wealth and good fortune. The Pawnee Indians dedicated their children to the morning star.

When a Toda baby is three months old, its father sees it for the first time. If it is a boy, he takes it early in the morning to the sacred dairy. At the place where the sacred buffalo are standing, he uncovers the baby's face and directs its gaze toward the rising sun. If the child is a girl, its mother takes it to the place where the women receive the buttermilk from the dairy, and there uncovers its face. The Toda women, as we have noticed, are never permitted near the sacred cattle; but the mother takes her girl baby as near them as the custom allows.

Omaha Indians had most unusual and impressive ceremonies for their new babies. The child was introduced to the universe and to the common life-giving power which they believed pervaded all things, animate and inanimate. Its arrival was formally announced eight days after birth in a ceremonial presided over by a special priest, who implored the forces and forms of nature to make its path smooth as it traveled over the rugged journey of life. He appealed to the sun, the moon, the stars, the winds, the clouds, the rains, the thunder and lightning, the hills and rivers, birds and animals. The whole ceremonial seems to have been an attempt on the part of the tribe to insure for their children the friendly attitude of all things in the universe with which the child might have contacts during its life. When it was three or four years old, it was formally introduced into the tribe. Its baby name was thrown away and it was given a new name establishing its membership in the clan and ritual group to which it belonged. It was also presented with a new pair of moccasins in which to take the first steps as a tribal member.

Primitive peoples are extremely fond of children. To be sure, superfluous babies may be eliminated by infanticide, as we shall see later, but no tribe is known in which children are not welcome, and where they are not treated,

as a rule, with the utmost kindness and affection. Parents are usually indulgent and rarely punish them as we do. Japanese tribes consider the absence of children a form of divine punishment, and most people have little use for a barren woman.

The Tasmanians, the lowliest people known, now unhappily extinct, were fond of their children. In many tribes the little ones are given the best of everything. Koryak children are attended to first at meals, and given the choicest bits of food. Vedda children receive the best food and shelter the tribe can provide. Primitive mothers are passionately fond of their children and fathers no less so, whether they are the man's own or those of another.

With all this love of children, why do certain tribes kill some of them at birth? Sometimes they are a sacrifice to the gods. More often the reason is grim necessity. In the Eskimo country, food may become so scarce that a number of new-born children must be put out of the way—usually girls, because the hunting of food falls to the men. Among nomadic peoples, a season of drought and a forced migration may make the same thing necessary. Sometimes the young children, too, have to be left behind on the march because they cannot keep up with the rest. In a few tribes infanticide hangs on

after the economic necessity for it has vanished. Nearly always it has its origin in some food shortage of the past.

The elimination of twin babies has a different background. Being out of the ordinary, they are either hailed as a mark of favor from the gods, or feared as ominous. Some tribes put one or both of a pair to death; for it is believed that they are a sign of unchastity in their mother or a warning of calamity. On the other hand, there are tribes that welcome twins, and think they must be treated with special care and consideration. They believe twins are sent only to a good woman who has been selected for the honor because she will be a fine mother. The Thonga of South Africa abhor twins, and the Baganda, their neighbors, love them. The Todas of India kill one twin if both are boys, and both if they are girls.

In most tribes male babies are most highly prized, though in tribes like the Akikuyu, where girls bring a bride-price of thirty goats, they are esteemed as a great blessing. In the Banks Islands, the female baby is preserved in preference to the male. Here the inheritance is in the female line, and girls bring a high bride-price; so the preference is a natural one.

The child's real name, among tribal folk, is usually considered an inseparable part of its personality. It is

sacred; it is never used in calling the child or in speaking to or of it. This intimate name is a secret known only to the closest relatives; if others knew it, evil spirits might discover it and use the name to work evil magic on the child. Questions by a white man as to a tribesman's personal name are often met with shocked silence; asking such a question is a grave social error. Census-takers among the American Indians in former days had to devise other methods than by listing the Redskins' real names, because they could never get any response to their questions on this point.

Many other names are given during an individual's lifetime, at the various stages of his participation in the tribal rites. For instance, he receives a new name when he is initiated into the tribe, or when he joins certain secret societies. Perhaps he gets another one when his first child is born, or even when he gets to be forty or forty-five years old.

Besides all these ceremonial names, a child is often given a name for use, or a nick-name. It may be associated with some trivial thing, such as the first object that the father sees after the child's birth, or the day of the month or time of day. Nick-names are sometimes given, like our own, in ridicule of something the child does when little. One Mohave boy was called "lemons,"

because, as his mother explained, "everybody likes lemons"; another was called a name meaning, "Can't keep his trousers up," because when he was small he had that difficulty.

Intimate names, which must not be revealed, are usually given with some ceremony, sometimes not until the child is several years old. They are not given a Kurnai boy of Australia until the initiation ceremonies. In Melanesia, the ceremonial name is given by the father's elder brother, or occasionally by the paternal grandfather or grandmother. In Borneo, a name is often selected for its unpleasant sound or meaning so that evil spirits will not like to use it. Some Eskimo tribes name the child before birth. The name is selected by a female friend or relative, who puts her hand on the mother's stomach and decides what the infant is to be called. The Yukaghir of Siberia give their children names which they think will bring them prosperity. A Koryak father divines what ancestral spirit has descended to the child, and names it accordingly. The Tlinkits of Alaska named the child for an ancestor on the mother's side, soon after birth, and later at a great feast gave it a name from the father's family. In many tribes all over the world, it is customary to address the father and mother of a child, as well as the close kin, by new titles after the birth of the first child. A man will

then be referred to by a term meaning "father of the child"; the mother, as "mother of the child." The Zuñi and Hopi Indians are among those who follow this practice. Among them, a man's relationship to the various members of his wife's family, with whom he has gone to live, is emphasized by the names indicating it through the child.

When the name is given, some tribes also give the child certain property, such as a head of cattle or a fruit tree. The Banyonkola of East Africa give a child two head of cattle. Among the Bori, a goat or a ewe lamb is set apart for it. The Koryak give to each newborn child one reindeer heifer. Such an arrangement is meant to provide for the child's future. By the time it is grown and ready to marry, it may have a fair sized herd of its own. In the Solomon Islands, a cocoanut palm is planted when a child is born, and only the child may sell its fruit. The Omaha give their children ponies and colts. Primitive parents never give away or sell the children's property without their consent.

Children whose parents have died are rarely left long as orphans in these communities. Adoption is frequent, for someone is always glad to take a child who has lost its parents. Women with no children of their own often adopt those of relatives who already have large families.

They thus avoid the disfavor usually felt by a barren woman. In some New Guinea tribes people who never had children of their own, or whose children have died, often adopt a child of a living relative who has several. It seems to be the courteous thing on the part of the parents to consent to such adoption.

In many tribes children captured in war raids were adopted. The Omaha Indians had an elaborate rite by which a young boy who was a captive of the tribe might be adopted into it. He thereafter shared all the rights and privileges of the tribe.

Sometimes adoption is accompanied by elaborate ceremonials, as in certain Borneo tribes in which they imitate the taboos and rituals of actual pregnancy and birth. The mother goes through all the purifying rites and is treated exactly as though she were bearing the child herself.

Some peoples carry adoption to an extreme. Blood relationships in a family practically cease to exist. Where the culture-pattern of the tribe prescribes that a man and wife shall adopt the children of others, and their own children shall in turn be adopted by some other family, no child lives with his real father and mother. The family then is not a biological unit, for it consists of father, mother, and some one else's children. It is

only a social or cultural unit. Nevertheless, the affection between members of such a family is apparently just as great as in a natural one, and the parents treat the adopted children exactly as if they were their own. An adopted son receives his father's clan name where descent is reckoned in the male line, just as a blood son would, and he inherits the same rights and privileges. The Todas of India and the Thonga of South Africa, and the people of Murray Island in the eastern Torres Straights are the best known tribes who practice strange modes of adoption.

Again, in tribal life the small family consisting of father, mother, and children is intricately associated with the larger kinship group known as the clan (or sib). All the individuals in a tribe who reckon their descent from a common ancestor, male or female, constitute a clan. Some tribes reckon this descent in the male line; others reckon it in the female line. A child soon learns to which clan he belongs and who are his relatives on both the maternal and the paternal side. If descent is reckoned in the maternal line, he finds that authority over him lies in his mother's brother, rather than in his father. He will inherit from his uncle, while his father's property and rank will go to a cousin, who is his father's nephew through a sister. In such tribes, a daughter

cannot be married without her uncle's consent and the greater portion of the bride-price goes to him. But usually, as in the Trobriand Islands, where such a plan is followed, the brothers, not the husband, support a woman and her children. Her husband is busy supporting his own married sisters and their families; so the arrangement is not as unfair as it seems, however illogical it may appear to us. Yet, it does lead to some complications. The father's duty is toward his nephews; his property goes to them, and he is supposed to look after their interests. But it is only natural that his sentiments should be more strongly attached to his wife's children and his own, with whom he has lived since their infancy. His inclination thus leads him to favor his wife's children whenever their interests are contrary to his nephews', and so to neglect his duties to the latter. Serious trouble has been known to arise in such a family situation among the Trobrianders, as well as among the Tsimshian of British Columbia, whose practice is similar. The only solution of the dilemma is for the man's son to marry his cousin; that is, his father's sister's daughter. Then the man's nephews, who receive his property, support his son, and all is well. This is one reason why cross-cousin marriages are regarded so favorably by such peoples.

Besides this system of inheritance from uncle to

nephew, there are many other complex arrangements for the handing on of property among persons related through a clan. Among the Thonga of South Africa, a man's eldest son does not inherit from his father unless the latter has no brother living. As a rule, inheritance is from brother to next younger brother. This was true also among the Aztecs of Tenochtitlan.

Some tribes, like the Bushmen, destroy all a man's possessions when he dies because they believe that the spirit of the dead man will have some need or use for them and will resent their appropriation by others. Such destructive wastefulness has greatly impeded the economic progress of the tribe.

The Bantu and other peoples follow a plan similar to the English rule of primogeniture, under which the eldest son inherits all the property, and the rest nothing. However, this type of inheritance is somewhat rare. In other East African tribes the eldest son inherits the prestige of being head of the family; but within it the property is considered to belong to all its members, and its use is enjoyed jointly. Even illegitimate children share in the inheritance.

The Vedda of Ceylon distribute property evenly among all the children, but the daughters' shares are given to their husbands. When a number of wives and

their offspring are to be considered, one of the wives is usually first in rank and her son first in inheritance. Among the Masai of East Africa, the eldest son of the principal wife inherits the largest share of his father's property. He also controls the girls of the family. The other sons receive the right to the herds which had been assigned to their mothers.

Among the Kaffir, two wives rank above the others. The son of one woman gets his father's rank and all the property except that which has been set aside especially for the son of the second woman. Daughters and sons of any other wives inherit nothing.

Sometimes it actually happens that the youngest child becomes the principal heir. Among the Naga of Manipur, the Badaga, who are neighbors of the Todas, the Kirghiz, and the Yukaghir, the youngest son remains with his parents and supports them. In return he receives their home and possessions. Among the Khasi, the youngest daughter, who performs the family rituals in propitiation of the ancestors, inherits the home and its contents.

Often children inherit rights and obligations and other intangibles which we do not consider property at all. Among the Maoris of New Zealand, and the Fiji, a child may inherit the obligation to avenge some wrong

done his father. Or a child may inherit the obligation to pay his parent's debts, as among the Igorotes in the Philippines. Shamanism, or the priestly office, is inherited in some tribes. A Kaffir eldest son inherits the knowledge and right to practice medicine from his father. Among the Wakamba, the Yuchi of California, and the Indians of Guiana in South America, rain-making is a profession which descends from father to son.

In Polynesia, the power, office, and lands of a chief theoretically pass into the hands of his son at birth. The infant is even considered of one rank higher than his father in the tribal hierarchy. The father, however, continues to exercise the powers and prerogatives of a chief until the son is old enough to take them over.

Chieftainships are inherited in many lands. In East Africa, a son may lose the right to be his father's successor if he is not considered worthy of that important position. He may actually have to fight his brothers for it, jealousy and intrigue being as common as they are in civilized royal families.

In New Guinea, the art of tatooing is handed down from mother to daughter. In Fiji, the practice of professional abortion is passed from mother to daughter and the knowledge of midwifery is kept in families and handed on in them.



FIVE

ADOLESCENCE AND INITIATION INTO TRIBAL ACTIVITY

BABIES who are allowed to live, or who survive the birth rites, are invariably treated more affectionately in a primitive tribe than they are in the average civilized family. Untutored savages consider it incredible callousness to deny a child anything he cries for. They rarely use any form of corporal punishment—in many tribes, never. Zuñi women regard the white women on the reservation as exceedingly vulgar because they spank their children. In New Guinea, where the people were until recently cannibalistic savages, the natives nearly lynched a white trader who was beating his child.

Indeed, little or no coercion along any line is exerted upon the children. The Mohave, for example, believes that individuals are born with certain aptitudes or gifts that will assert themselves in time, and that it is therefore wrong to try to force a child to do anything. He will of his own accord exert himself when his interests and capacities are ready. Many tribes have similar beliefs.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

Education, as we conceive it, is completely lacking in primitive tribes. A child acquires most of his knowledge from observation and imitation of his elders, as he grows up. It may seem to us a haphazard method of instruction, but apparently it is as successful in fitting a child for the life he is to lead as our own system, if not better. He learns by doing and observing. At a much earlier age than a civilized child, he understands the processes of nature and the customs of the community.

Much of this knowledge is gained in play with other children outside of the home and family circle. Their games and play imitate the economic activities and religious ceremonials of the adults in the tribe. At play, a primitive child is just as intent on the approval of his playmates as our own children are in their play. This tendency leads some tribes to take their children out of the family household at an early age and train them in the tribal customs and traditions in separate boys' and girls' clubs.

Early in life the children begin to take part in the economic life of the tribe. Seminole Indian babies learn to do domestic work by the time they are four years old. Eight- and ten-year-old Yukaghir children help in the household. Girls learn to sew and cook, while boys go hunting and fishing. In Africa, the little girl begins to

help her mother in the gardens when very young, and the little boys mind the goats and lambs and scare away the baboons from the crops. Kaffir and Samoan children six or seven years old carry the younger children about on their hips or backs, and a Kaffir boy of four can set a most intricate bird trap. A Chukchi boy of five knows how to harness a reindeer, and does the job alone by the time he is a year older.

In most tribes no formal education takes place. The child absorbs what he can by observation of the behavior of those around him. As he grows older, there is sometimes a little informal instruction by the parents into the special techniques of the tribe. Fathers may take the boys fishing or hunting and show them how such things are done in the tribe. Mothers may instruct the girls in the domestic crafts that they have not already learned.

A child is taught or absorbs the conventions of behavior that he must observe. He learns whether it is correct to receive his food in both hands or in one, whether a spoon should be held bowl upward or downward, where he is permitted to sit or stand. A little Kaffir child is told not to be greedy when visiting, as though he came from a family that did not have enough to eat. He learns to show deference to older people and to prominent

persons, and what words of address are proper to use and when to use them. American Indian children were told by the old men of the tribe to be generous and kind. They were given long lectures on their duties and the conduct expected of them. They were warned to revere the supernatural powers, and instructed in much of the tribe's folk-lore.

From this informal instruction the child soon learns what is considered right and proper in his particular tribe. Nowhere, even in the crudest cultures, does he escape the efforts of his elders to make him conform to customs prevalent in the tribe in which he happens to be born. Conformity is enforced by public opinion; ridicule is visited upon one who does not follow the accepted forms. This method is remarkably effective, because tribal folk are sensitive to the approval or disapproval of the group in which they live. Since in these relatively small tribal groups, people know each other intimately, group disapproval is usually all that is needed to keep the members in line. In most cases it is reinforced by fear. A violation of the more important taboos and customs is believed to bring harm to the tribe and death to the individual who commits it. The anger and vengeance of the tribal gods are a powerful deterrent to actions which the tribe considers wrong.

In addition to this hit-or-miss instruction, nearly every tribe makes an effort to impart to its children an understanding of its tribal traditions and practices in a more formal and impressive way. It tries, as we do, to impress upon its children the sacredness of its institutions and customs, and their superiority over those of any other people. We have put our beliefs, religions, philosophies, and sciences into writing. The more unsophisticated peoples hand their experiences on through oral traditions. They usually set aside a definite period in the life of a member when he is put in full possession of that which they consider most valuable and most sacred. Such occasions are accompanied by elaborate ceremonies and rituals.

It is perpetually surprising and sometimes highly amusing to civilized people to observe the enormous amount of time that tribal folk spend in ceremonial. In many South Sea Island tribes the ceremonies connected with launching a boat on a trading expedition, take much longer than the actual construction of the boat. Among the Zuñi, the fondness for ceremonial is carried so far that there is scarcely a day in the year that is not set aside for some ceremony.

The age or period which different peoples select for introducing their children into membership in the com-

munity and into the tribal secrets and traditions is quite arbitrary. Some wait until a comparatively mature age, while others initiate boys of four to seven years into the mysteries of the tribal religious life. But certain steps or stages in the life of an individual from birth to death are always emphasized by different peoples as of great significance to the welfare of both the individual and the tribe. The steps are not uniform, however, for some tribes totally ignore or notice only slightly the very events which others consider of utmost importance.

The way different tribes treat their children on the verge of social and physical maturity is especially arbitrary. A time is set by custom when the tribal mysteries are revealed, and recognition of the steps achieved in the learning and growing-up process takes place. This event is known as initiation. The ceremonies of some peoples emphasize the social maturity of their children and completely disregard their physical maturity. The ritual is that by which the child is formally introduced into the tribe as an adult member. They do not necessarily occur at the time of puberty, but frequently much earlier or much later. In one community the ceremonies may be more or less celebrations of certain achievements; in another, they may mark the youth's entrance into the secret societies or professions.

Some tribes pay no attention to either social or physical adulthood; among these are the Andaman Islanders, some Melanesian peoples, and some American Indian tribes. Many others place the whole emphasis on the physical change in boys and girls at puberty. Their ceremonials are a recognition of that change, rather than the social aspect of growing up. The time selected for them usually coincides with the time of puberty. However, both aspects are frequently combined—initiation into the tribe and social adulthood, and physical maturity and admission to adult sex life.

The ceremonial recognition of social maturity is often accompanied by definite external changes in dress or ornaments. A Hopi girl at this time does her hair into knots over her ears. In other tribes both youths and maidens are tattooed in special ways. Tattooing in some Eskimo and North American tribes is a sign that a girl is marriageable. In many tribes it is also a mark of social distinction. Men are tattooed for personal achievements or for some special office in the tribe. In Papua and Fiji a boy at this time begins to wear a loin-cloth. Some Papuan girls carry a basket as a sign of maturity. Among the Todas, of India, a boy's ears must be pierced before he may enter the precincts of the sacred cattle.

Social initiation is sometimes a sort of reward for certain

achievements. When a Cheyenne or Sioux boy killed his first buffalo, or touched an enemy's horse on his first raid, or performed some similar feat of daring, his father made a public announcement of the event and gave away horses.

Admission to the secret societies that exist in many tribes, to the professional groups like those of the tattooists, to the priesthood, or to the special handicrafts also occurs at the time of initiation. Nor are the girls overlooked. An Algonkin or Igorote girl may then become a priestess, or in Fiji she may become a midwife, or in American Indian tribes she may enter certain guilds or societies.

Where such ceremonies have not taken place before puberty, a separation of boys and girls occurs in many tribes. They live in club-houses apart from their families, and brothers and sisters must observe more than ever the taboos on their speech and conduct. It often means a considerable disruption of the family ties. This is especially true in Melanesia and Australia. Initiation forms new bonds between boys or girls of the same age, to the exclusion of other ties, much as our college fraternities and sororities do. In the Banks Islands all initiated men eat and sleep in club-houses apart from the women. Kaffir children are separated from their mothers

before puberty, at seven to twelve years of age, and live in boys' or girls' huts. In Australia, all parental discipline for boys ends when they are ten, and tribal discipline begins. They live in separate huts with the men.

Some tribes that place emphasis on puberty and sexual maturity devote most of their ceremonial attention to the girl—others to the boy. The North American Indians pay no attention to the boys' attainment of puberty, but often have elaborate rites to celebrate the girl's physical maturity. They recognized the boys' social adulthood at an earlier or later age.

The Zuñi, whose lives are filled with ceremonies, initiate boys of six and seven into the mysteries of the ceremonial groups. An adult man acts as sponsor for the boy in these ceremonies, which take place at a distance from the village. The little boys are brought face to face with the sacred masked dancers, who are masked men representing the gods. The dancers whip the boys until they cry, and then reveal themselves as the fathers, brothers, and uncles of the initiates. The boys must never reveal to the women of the tribe who the masked dancers are, and are warned that if they do their heads will be cut off and kicked into the lake at the edge of the world. After this ceremony, the Zuñi boy is thought fit to enter the sacred dance house after death.

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In Melanesia, too, the boys are initiated into the tribal mysteries without reference to their physical maturity. The young men of the Plains Indians tried to have a vision to mark their attainment of manhood. They fasted and purified themselves in sweat-houses to obtain one; often they were middle-aged before they succeeded. Some men never had a vision, but those who did became prominent and highly respected persons in the tribe. Both men and women of the Omaha sought to have visions.

The ceremonies by which various tribes recognize the physical maturity of their girls have different backgrounds. Among some peoples they emphasize sex attraction and the fact that the girl is now marriageable. In others, they have a religious significance. Those of the Omaha and Maidu Indians were in part rehearsals of the creation stories of the tribe. Frequently the ceremonies mark a new social status. The girl, who up to this time has been under parental control, breaks away and becomes entirely independent. In Rhodesia, she throws her garments on her parent's roof as a sign of independence, and a period of license and sexual promiscuity follows. Theft and sexual freedom are permitted the girls of some Papuan tribes at this time. A girl of the Naga of Manipur is free to go where she pleases, and may even

move to another village if she likes. Ceremonies of some tribes represent all three aspects of the event—marriageability, social freedom, and religious significance.

The treatment accorded the adolescent girl varies. In most tribes it includes rests, baths, steaming, roasting, and nearly always fasting. Among the American Indians, the girl is usually not considered unclean, but is thought to be in close contact with the supernatural powers. Sometimes mysterious powers are supposed to reside in the girl herself at this time. In any case, she is believed to exercise occult influences, and everything she says or does is significant to herself and to her whole future life. Whatever she touches is dangerous to others, and all her actions affect the rest of the tribe. The Déné of British Columbia, who are most extreme, require that she remain in seclusion for one to three years. She may not eat meat or fish, or bathe in certain streams or lakes. During this period, her father distributes gifts to the tribe, to teach her liberality. However, she is not considered impure in any way. The restrictions imposed on her are somewhat similar to those placed on a warrior of the tribe during his first four campaigns.

A girl of the Maidu of California goes into only partial seclusion at puberty. There is a public ceremonial at night which she attends, and at which she sings and

dances and feasts. In the daytime, she stays in a special hut provided for her use, or goes into the forest to receive instruction from her female relatives in the tribal ethics and traditions. She is admonished to be industrious, chaste, liberal, and virtuous in every respect. After the ceremonies are over, she goes off to the hills alone for several days as a sign of her new independence.

The Seri of California also have a puberty feast for the girl, at which her face is painted with special signs, hereditary in the female line of her family. Then she is free to marry whomever she chooses. Her relatives build a house for her in which she lives, in a trial marriage for a year with the man of her choice. Throughout the year she receives special attentions from all her prospective husband's friends, and from other young men in the tribe as well. If, after a year of experiment and comparison, she is still satisfied with her choice, he becomes a permanent guest in her house. If she later grows tired of him, she can at any time ask him to leave.

When Athabaskan Indian girls arrive at puberty, an important ceremony takes place. Four nights in succession the girl and some boy of the tribe dramatize the culture hero and his grandmother in the story of the tribe's origin. They believe that the ceremony of enacting this tribal drama brings good fortune to the whole

community and secures a happy and honorable life for the girl.

The Shasta Indians have an elaborate ten-day ceremony, during which the girl's conduct is carefully regulated. She is secluded, and has to observe food taboos. She must not come near a fire nor see others, but must sit in her hut facing the east. At the end of four days she must perform some difficult task, such as gathering firewood from the mountains for the whole village. That night a feast is held at which she must dance until exhausted. On the last night of the ten days, complete license is given to both men and women; the festive occasion ends in a war-dance in which everybody takes part. Not until all this is over is the girl considered marriageable. The ceremony is a severe drain on the resources of her father, for he has to provide feasts for the entire village.

Training for personal virtues by endurance tests of one nature or another is usually connected with the rites. A Cheyenne girl held a vigil for four nights that she might be strong. A Maidu girl sleeps on rocks for the same reason. She also fasts and goes into seclusion so that she will not be too gay or talkative in later life. A Shuswap girl undergoes several physical ordeals to prepare herself to withstand the future pains of childbirth.

The idea of impurity at puberty, accompanied by very elaborate types of ceremony, is common in many African and Australian tribes. These practices come of varied origins, but in all of them the sex emphasis is predominant. The Baganda in Africa explain puberty as a result of union with a supernatural being. It is called a marriage, and in their ceremonies the girl is dressed as a bride. She is given sex instruction by her mother and the old women of the tribe, as a part of her training for life and real marriage. In some parts of the Torres Straits, the moon is believed responsible for the physical changes in the girl.

Similar beliefs, though often confused and complicated, underlie the ceremonies of mutilation and defloration which mark many puberty rites. These practices on girls are frequently found in Africa, in Australia, among some Oceanic tribes, and occasionally in South America. They are rare in North America and Asia.

In many tribes these performances are thought to insure the well-being of the girl, to make her strong or to remove uncleanness. Others, like the Masai and the Zulu in Africa, think that they make her chaste after her marriage, or promote her fertility. Among the Volans of the Cochin area an operation is performed to make the girl marriageable. After it has taken place, it

is announced that she can now marry; puberty and seclusion ceremonies follow it. Girls of the Nandi tribe in Africa are secluded for two months while they undergo intricate purification and defloration rites, though they are not considered impure. The Nandi warriors go through a similar process. In other tribes, the rites are supposed to add to the girl's sex attraction.

Australian tribes, such as the Arunta, are the most radical in their treatment of both girls and boys, and their ceremonies the most elaborate. Some of them scarify and paint their girls, and nearly all of them practice some form of ceremonial defloration. These tribes are also the most extreme in their ideas of the girl's impurity at this time. They require her to go half a mile away from the camp or village, and to wear twigs on her head to warn men of her uncleanness. She is carefully watched and guarded to keep her from being a danger to anyone. Although Australian women are thus initiated into physical maturity, they are not allowed to take any part in the religious and political life of the tribe.

The Kaffirs believe their girls are unclean; they will not permit them to drink nor touch milk. They are not secluded, however, and no ceremonial attention is paid them at this time.

Many other tribes have only purification rites. The Diegueños of California and the Missouri Indians toasted their girls and threw seeds over their bodies. Other peoples bury a girl in hot sand or steam her. The Veddas of Ceylon, the Todas of India, some Bantu tribes, certain California Indians, and a number of others have no taboos against women's uncleanness, and pay no attention to puberty.

In the past, the Samoans and Hawaiians were also licentious, with defloration rituals and ceremonies. There is even a hint of religious prostitution in their practices, perhaps imported from the continental civilizations of India and China. In Samoa, one girl was selected to be "Taupo"—next in rank to the chief. She had to be a virgin, which was proved by a public defloration. Afterwards she became the wife of the chief.

In a few tribes girls are trained and dedicated to religious service. Either complete chastity is required of them or they become the concubines of the gods and the priests. Baganda girls who are dedicated to the tribal gods are supposed to keep the sacred fires burning and to guard the holy objects of the tribe. They are often set aside for this temple service by mothers who had promised a female child to the temple if the gods would intercede to overcome their barrenness. When such a

girl reaches puberty, the god decides whom she is to marry. Among the Ewe of East Africa, girls dedicated to the temple learn to dance and chant. They are said to be married to the god for three years. Their social prestige is much enhanced by their temple service.

Similar customs flourish among the African Herero and some Congo tribes. Some Pacific Island and Hawaiian tribes have had priestesses; it is not known whether or not chastity was demanded of them.

Initiation rites for boys and young men in primitive tribes are as varied as those for the girls. As we have seen, some of them are purely social, and mark the joining of secret societies and tribal councils, while others are definitely a recognition of the boy's physical maturity and his admittance to the sex rights and duties of the tribe.

Among the American Indians, boys went through a process of physical hardening as a preparation for manhood. They took cold baths in the river every morning and practiced abstinence and self-restraint. They participated in warlike or athletic exercises, such as racing, wrestling, and leaping. Each boy received long lectures from the old men on the moral qualities he should develop. He was told that shame and disgrace would follow any lapse from virtue; that he must not steal; that he must

be chaste and not commit adultery; that he must not be lazy, nor boast, nor lie; that he must be brave and hospitable; he must not be quarrelsome.

A young Indian of Guiana had to clear a piece of forest and show his prowess as a hunter and fisherman by bringing in stores of food, before he was ready for marriage. Sometimes there are changes of dress to mark the change of status. Papuan and Fiji boys start to wear the loin cloth as a "band of manhood." The Jibaro boys of Ecuador at this time begin to wear full male dress and are allowed to smoke.

There are no definite puberty ceremonials for boys among the American Indians; but in many other parts of the world the physical change in boys is made the occasion for elaborate rites of circumcision, tatooing, mutilation, and painting of the body.

Circumcision is a very widespread practice in tribal life. It was originally, and still is in many places, regarded as a preparation for sex life, though it has sometimes become only a mark of social maturity and does not coincide with the time of physical maturity.

A Kaffir male is considered a boy all his life if he remains uncircumcised. He cannot take part in the tribal councils, nor hold property or be a warrior. No woman will marry him. Many primitive peoples share their

belief that circumcision helps procreation and that barrenness and sterility will surely result if it is omitted.

Masai boys, in Africa, go to the tribal medicine-man for circumcision. Then they bathe and take an ox-hide, which they carry with them to sit on for four days. At the end of that time they are tonsured and dressed as men. A Thonga boy is isolated for three months, during which he is given moral instruction by a lecturer who climbs a near-by tree and talks to him on manhood.

These rites in some Australian tribes are most severe and elaborate. All the boys of a certain age are initiated together at a tribal assembly. Each novice has two instructors with whom he goes into seclusion. He is roasted near a fire and has to hunt food all day until he is exhausted. In the evening he undergoes a ceremony in which several teeth are knocked out by a man disguised as a god. He must show no signs of feeling during this mutilation. He is then instructed in the power of the god. His body is painted white, and he is circumcised by the old men of the tribe. Following this, he is told about the marriage laws, the boundaries of their country, and what he may eat. Finally, the sacred objects and magic practices of the tribe are revealed to him. The ceremony lasts for days. When it is all over, the initiate

is a member of the tribe, but he is still under the control of the tribal elders. He has merely substituted tribal control for parental.

The old men of these tribes control all marriages, which cannot be performed without their consent. They do not allow the young men to marry until they are thirty years old. Then they are given to the widows and old women, while the men of forty-five and fifty marry the young girls of ten and twelve, who were betrothed to them when the girls were in infancy.

Most Polynesian and Melanesian tribes have no special initiations, but there are rules for entrance into the secret societies. The boy has a probationary period before he can enter them, during which he receives training in the physical and moral qualities expected of him, and knowledge of the tribe's traditions and precedents.

The education of a chief's son among these tribes is more complicated than that of the other boys, and begins earlier. He undergoes a period of seclusion for training in the art of fishing. When he emerges, his father gives a feast to the entire tribe. In Fiji, the son of a chief goes into seclusion for three days after he has killed his first man. He is forbidden to lie down or sleep or change his clothes during this seclusion.

In other tribes a father hands his son over to a maternal

uncle for training. The boy is instructed in all the virtues, taught the degree of kinship permitted in marriage, and the use of magic for love spells and charms. After a month's seclusion, he is washed in the sea, anointed with cocoanut oil, and is ready for adult life. He stays three more months with his uncle while he receives proposals of marriage from the girls of the tribe. When the three months are up his parents give a feast, and present gifts to the girl he has accepted for his bride.

The Samoans perform very painful operations of circumcision and sub-incision on adolescent boys. When a boy is seventeen years old, he joins the society of unmarried men without a title, but he hopes some day to earn a *matai* name, which means "owner of a title and head of the household." He will then become a member of the Fono or assembly of head-men. There is only a limited number of such men, and as everyone covets a title in the Samoan caste hierarchy, there is keen competition among the young men for such an appointment.

After puberty, the limitations on the sex conduct of the young people vary considerably in tribal society. The attitude toward sex is distinctly unlike our own, sex relations and marriage usually being more or less separated. Marriage is for the purpose of establishing a family. It gives a man status in the community. It forms

a contract between two families, and imposes many new duties and obligations on those entering it.

Many tribes emphasize chastity, such as the Omaha, the Sioux, and many Siberian tribes. The Veddas of Ceylon, the Igorotes of Luzon, and certain African and Australian tribes even consider unchastity a crime that is punishable with death. In others, chastity makes the girl more desirable and brings a higher price for her. The North American Indians seem to place the highest value on chastity, and the African tribes generally the lowest.

On the other hand, pre-marital virginity is almost unknown in many tribes, and the widest sexual freedom is permitted before marriage. In New Guinea, great decorum is observed in public, but secret meetings of boys and girls at night are quite proper. In Samoa and the Trobriand Islands, no sex restrictions are imposed from earliest childhood, except those of kinship. Little boys and girls play together at sexual games. As soon as they grow up, the girl takes a series of more or less permanent lovers, with whom they live openly in the bachelors' huts. Sometimes an attachment of this kind grows into marriage, while in other cases, a boy and a girl who have never known each other may marry, after having had numerous individual love affairs with others.

After the marriage, strict fidelity is expected of both, though it is not always lived up to. But what was open and perfectly correct before marriage becomes illicit and disgraceful afterwards.

Among the Masai, groups of young girls live with the warriors in the bachelor club-houses as long as they like. When they grow tired of the life, they go home and marry. The only restriction seems to be that a girl whose marriage has been arranged for must not cohabit with her fiancé. As in the Trobriand Islands, when the marriage has taken place, the former freedom ceases.

Conduct which would make a girl an outcast in our society, does not affect her social standing or marriageability at all in tribal communities. The double standard does not exist. Where freedom is permitted, it is to both sexes.

The groups among which this freedom is allowed are always definitely prescribed. Any violations of the kinship regulations or taboos are serious crimes, and are met with extreme punishment. And since there is such a clear distinction between the conduct which is permissible before marriage and the behavior expected after it, the stability of the family is not impaired by this premarital freedom.



SIX

DAILY LIFE IN THE TRIBE

TRIBAL families must ever be occupied with mankind's all-important task of gaining a livelihood. They never philosophize about it, but take it for granted. The tribe's conscious activities and organization are centered on the problem of getting food; the daily lives of its members revolving around their economic pursuits, just as in more civilized communities.

One thinks of the American Indian as a savage whose chief occupation was warfare and whose greatest joy was the scalping of his enemies. George Bird Grinnell, in a book called *The Cheyenne Indians*, has revealed an entirely different and much truer picture of Indian life. He studied the daily life of this Indian tribe in the days when the buffalo still roamed the western plains in large numbers. He pictures the normal peaceful life of the Cheyenne before the white man's civilization made havoc of the native culture.

A Cheyenne camp was organized chiefly for the buffalo

hunt, which was the tribe's most important means of livelihood. Their tents or lodges of buffalo skins were set up in a great circle, with the open end always facing east.

Before sunrise in the morning, the women of the tribe emerged from the camp, where they had already kindled the fires, and went to the river or spring for the day's supply of water. The men and boys appeared soon after and rushed to the river for their daily plunge. Some of the more hardy ones even kept this up during the winter months, when they had to break the ice before they could bathe.

The women, who did not take a morning bath, in the meantime prepared breakfast. Some of the younger boys attended to the horses. They took out to graze those that had been tied near the tents all night, and put others in their places, ready for an unexpected attack or similar emergency. When the meal was finished, the camp crier began to make his rounds, shouting out the commands of the chiefs in regard to the day's buffalo hunt, or announcing that the camp would soon be moved, or that there would be a dance that night, or that some father was giving away horses in honor of his son's achievement on the hunt. People came out of their lodges to listen and discuss the news, as we do when the newsboy calls an "extra."

During the morning, some of the younger women and girls might go in groups of two or three to the woods to gather roots and berries and firewood. The older women were often invited by a special messenger to help make a new lodge or tent for a bride. This business usually lasted until nightfall. It was the occasion for much friendly gossip and conversation among the women gathered together for the work. The talk frequently turned on what an easy time the newly-wed girl would have, because her mother was giving her furniture for the lodge and her aunts and cousins everything else she needed. The number of horses her father had given her would also be discussed at length.

The women who were not helping with the new lodge were often at a meeting of the women's quilling society. They ornamented robes, lodge covers, and other leather articles with artistic designs worked with the quills of porcupines. To be a member of this exclusive society, a woman had to give proof of exceptional skill and craftsmanship in the work. The members were as highly esteemed for their skill as the men who had distinguished themselves for bravery in warfare. The quilling had to be done in definitely prescribed ways and was accompanied by considerable ceremony.

When the young girls returned from the berry-picking

or wood-gathering, they often found a group of their suitors waiting near their fathers' lodges for a chance to talk to them. A Cheyenne girl frequently had half a dozen or more young men as suitors and was courted for years before she consented to marry.

The children of the tribe played together during the day at a short distance from where their mothers were working. Their games were imitations of the activities of the grown-ups. They played at camping with dolls and miniature lodges, at war, or at buffalo hunting. They often "played house," mimicking the domestic customs of their parents, never having husbands on account of tribal exogamy, and using the younger children and even the puppies for babies.

The men spent most of the days on the hunt. A young married man often gave his share of the meat to his mother-in-law, to whom, according to the tribal taboos, he was not allowed to speak. This was considered a courteous act on his part.

In the evening, the real life of the camp began. It was frequently spent in feasting, music, and dancing. In one lodge, a group of young men and women might have a social dance, as distinguished from a ceremonial one with religious significance. In another lodge, the medicine-man might preside over a prayer meeting, and sing songs

to the spirits, imploring their help. The older men often gathered to hear an expert story-teller especially invited to furnish entertainment for the evening. The young husband who had given the meat to his mother-in-law now enjoyed the fruit of his generosity. He was at a feast in his own lodge, to which his special friends had been invited and for which his mother-in-law had cooked the meat and other food. Such a feast was the occasion for the observance of elaborate etiquette. The guests refrained from eating until a sacrificial offering of meat was made to the four points of the compass, and only the most correct and formal table manners were ever allowed.

The days of the Cheyenne varied little from this pattern except when they moved camp or were at war with a neighboring tribe.

Let us now turn to the Antipodes. Life in a village on one of the islands of Melanesia, which are just north of Australia, presents a different story. The climate is tropical and the people live by cultivating gardens of yams and by fishing. Their houses are of bamboo, varying in dimensions with the size of the family. Polygamy is practiced among them, and where a man's several wives and their younger children occupy one dwelling, the house is very large. Some of them are as much as

thirty feet high, with smaller huts for each wife and her young offspring within it.

The older boys and girls do not live with their mothers, but in club-houses of their own. Occasionally a man's married sons also have their wives' huts within the large family residence. The men themselves live in their own club-houses and go home only to eat their meals and visit their wives at night. Besides the family residences, the village is made up of the young boys' and girls' club-houses, the men's club-houses, and the sacred clubs of the ghost societies, in which the paraphernalia of the men's secret societies are kept and the initiation ceremonies and meetings take place. The latter buildings are usually at some distance from the other houses of the village.

The women in the Melaneisan tribes are looked down on as inferiors. Their place is in the home, while the men's place is in their club-houses. The wives prepare the meals for their husbands, though they never eat together; the woman merely serves her husband and looks on while he eats. There is no family life like that of the Cheyenne, for even the children leave their mothers before they are ten years old.

The men and women carry on the daily work in separate groups. The garden patches, which the men own, are sometimes cultivated by the whole family together.

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At other times, the men leave the houses while the women attend to their domestic labor, and the women remain indoors while the men are doing their work. In the tribal dances, too, the men and women dance in separate groups.

This distinction is most rigid in regard to the secret societies; women are never allowed to become members. Most of the activities of village life are concerned with the social prestige which comes to the man or boy who has enough property to buy initiation into one of them or to be promoted to the next higher rank. The successful man in Melanesia is he who has enough pigs and mats and shells to pay for the privilege of becoming a member of a secret society. A father gives his son a pig when he is born to begin the accumulation of property for this purpose. All the relatives help, for they reap the reflected glory of his success.

Paradoxically enough, a husband and wife welcome a daughter rather than a son. A son means more hard work for everybody in the family, in order to give him a respectable position in the community and so keep up the family's prestige. A daughter, on the other hand, will enrich the family exchequer on her betrothal, by the pigs and mats her husband's family must contribute. No wonder parents betroth their daughter in infancy to

a propertied man who will pay for her in installments! Furthermore, the Melanesians are a matrilineal society. A son does not inherit his father's land and fruit trees and canoe; they go to a nephew, a sister's son.

The activities of the ghost societies sometimes strike terror to the hearts of the other villagers. From their mysterious precincts, where the women and children never dare go, strange cries and sounds suddenly arise. The women and children run into their houses in great fear, for this is a signal that the spirits of the dead have come to visit with the members of the society. If one of the ghosts should see a woman or child, it would supposedly mean certain death. Actually, of course, the fantastically dressed figures, with grotesque faces and immense tall head-dresses, which come forth from the club-houses, are only the members in disguise. They are setting out on an expedition for the purpose of terrorizing the village, beating and robbing the uninitiated, destroying their garden patches, and generally asserting their power in the tribe.

Numerous festivals fill the rounds of Melanesian life. There are feasts when a girl marries, or when a canoe is launched on a trading expedition, but the greatest and most important affairs are those given by a man in honor of some ancestor. These feasts are essential to his ad-

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vancement in the ghost society to which he belongs. There is a hierarchy of steps within it, much like our Masonic degrees, which a man must climb to achieve honor in his village. Each step requires the contribution of more property. According to traditional belief, it is the supernatural power of his departed ancestors which enables him to accumulate property. He can only retain his power by giving a feast in honor of the ancestor whenever he himself, or his son, or any male relative achieves a higher rank in the ghost society. The most lavish feast is given when he reaches the highest rank in the scale, to show his gratitude to the spirits for the help they have given him.

The whole thing becomes a vicious circle in which all the members of a family work to secure pigs and mats and shells to pay for feasts to obtain supernatural help in acquiring more property, so as to rise higher in rank and give more feasts. The whole economic life of a Melanesian village centers around the accumulation of property for this purpose.

Daily life in the Trobriand Islands, which are coral-reef islands off the southeastern coast of New Guinea, is similar in some respects. Women are not inferior to the men in these tribes, however, and they are not separated from the men by residence requirements. A man and

wife and their children live together in a family hut and share in the community life.

The Trobriand tribes, like the Melanesians, live by fishing and gardening, but the men and women fish together and work together in the garden patches. The day's work in a Trobriand village begins early. Breakfast is a scanty meal of cold "left-overs" from the night before. When it is finished, the men sometimes depart on more extended fishing expeditions, while the women remain in the shallow shore waters, shell-fishing. On other days they set out together to work in the garden. They go about other tasks, too, during the cool hours of the morning. The women do not stay at home because of the babies, but take them along on the berry-picking or fruit-gathering, and lay them aside on a mat while they work. The men usually take care of the more strenuous labor, but both stop to rest during the heat of the day. When evening comes, a wife returns to her household duties. She has to cook the main meal of the day, while her husband plays with the children and feeds the baby. The men rarely help with the cooking, for they dislike to do tasks that are known as women's work.

Among the Trobrianders a wife is by no means a submissive slave. She is, indeed, completely independent of her husband; for, while he owns the house in which

they live, her brothers furnish the food for her and her children. The products of her husband's labor go to the support of his sisters and their families. In spite of this arrangement, or perhaps because of it, a man and wife are usually rather closely united, their family life is remarkably harmonious and happy.

The cooking of the evening meal takes place in the open in front of the huts, which stand close together in rows in the village. Friendly visiting with the neighbors goes on, the events of the day are discussed, and gossip is exchanged. It is the hour of relaxation and pleasure for the whole village.

Like nearly every other people, their lives are dotted with frequent ceremonies and feasts, in which everyone participates. Dancing and singing and religious ceremonies are the usual entertainment. The chief of the village, who holds that office because he is the wealthiest man, usually is the host.

From our survey of many groups, scattered all over the world, it should be apparent that the life of primitive people is not so easy and uncomplicated as we have been wont to imagine, but that, on the contrary, it is intricately regulated to the smallest detail. The individual is really less free to do as he pleases than are we with our many laws and civilized conventions. The conditions of primitive

life place his actions under closer scrutiny than is customary even among the inhabitants of our smallest towns. A civilized person could hardly bear to live hemmed in by the numberless restrictions, ceremonies, and taboos that surround the lives of primitive folk. Tribal or savage life is nowhere the free life. Rousseau's noble, natural savage slinks away to join the company of other mythical creatures.

At the same time, the life of these humble cousins of ours is not lacking in its own joys and compensations; in some instances it has interests which are lacking in our own more sophisticated and mechanized existence.

Although the beginnings of the human family remain shrouded in mystery, the domestic arrangements in tribal life today are evidence of the great variety of family patterns which the human mind has developed through the centuries. Every people, primitive or civilized, has found its own solution to the problem, in some cases alike and in others different.

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